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## **Tourism & Quality of Life in Greenland**

*Exploration through farm stays in South Greenlandic settlements*

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*Published in:*  
The Arctic Yearbook

*Publication date:*  
2018

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Steenholdt, N. C., & Chimirri, D. (2018). Tourism & Quality of Life in Greenland: Exploration through farm stays in South Greenlandic settlements. *The Arctic Yearbook, 2018*, 123-140.  
[https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2018/Scholarly\\_Papers/7\\_AY2018\\_Steenholdt.pdf](https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2018/Scholarly_Papers/7_AY2018_Steenholdt.pdf)

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# Tourism & Quality of Life in Greenland: Exploration through Farm Stays in South Greenlandic Settlements

Naja Carina Steenholdt & Daniela Chimirri

*Studies of how the development of industries impacts resident quality of life in Greenland have largely focused on fisheries and mining, neglecting the emerging tourism industry in the country. In this article, we aim to contribute to the reduction of this gap within academia and praxis by exploring how the developing tourism industry in South Greenland interrelates with resident quality of life in this area. Based on the lack of existing academic literature and public awareness within tourism and quality of life in South Greenland, we investigate the relevance of the tourism industry, specifically farm tourism, effect on resident quality of life. Through a small-scale exploratory case study of farm stays in South Greenlandic settlements, we aim to create an understanding of how resident quality of life and farm tourism interrelates. By applying the bottom-up spillover theory as theoretical frame, we investigate whether generated income from farm tourism can contribute to people's state of wellbeing, but also that there is more to wellbeing than "just" money. Based on generated data, our study concludes that there is a close interrelation between farm tourism and resident QoL in South Greenland. Subsequently, we argue that there are relevant grounds in a larger perspective for further research within the field of tourism and QoL in Greenland.*

## Introduction

The increasing amount of debates in Greenland, centering on economic growth, reflects the widespread acknowledgement of its essentiality for the welfare state as such as well as on the way to independence from Denmark. Common grounds proclaiming economic development as an inevitable step on the way towards this goal can certainly also be found across academic perspectives and related arguments. According to the current political administration: “*regardless of whether the aim is a strong welfare economy, independence, or trade and industry growth, the Number One resource is the nation's population. [...] This makes it imperative to raise the general level of education and training, and creating good conditions for coming generations to grow up in*” (Naalakkersuisut, 2017). This illustrates the necessity to enlarge the perspective of and create grounds for development that embrace the

economic as well as the socio-economic dimensions. Up until the present, quality of life studies in Greenland like the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA) have addressed how fishing, hunting and mining have affected resident quality of life (Poppel, 2015; Snyder & Poppel, 2017, Poppel et al. 2007).

Within the tourism related debates in Greenland, public discussions beyond the point of economy and its monetary significance for the country as well as research on the role of tourism in socio-economic dimensions for the Greenlandic people are scarce. Undeniably, as researched by numerous academics: tourism happens within communities and therefore influences local life in positive as well as negative ways (Adanan et al., 2010). Arguably, since the communities are affected by tourism, the social dimension needs to be granted the same attention as the economic dimensions of tourism development. Hence, policy makers, tourism actors and researchers need to consider the causal relation of resident quality of life and tourism development in Greenland. In order to raise the awareness and inspire a rethinking in this direction, we explore how tourism development in Greenland, in our specific case farm tourism in South Greenland, interrelates with quality of life. To do so, we proceed with a bottom-up hypothesis, which is the understanding that different life domains, such as material wellbeing, health, emotional wellbeing etc. have an impact on overall quality of life, where the different life domains can spill over one another.

## Let's Talk About South Greenland: The Status Quo

During the past century, development in South Greenland has, setting aside the comprehensive development of the public sector, evolved mainly around natural resources, such as fisheries and mining of raw materials. There are, however, promises and expectations linked to the development of other sectors. As Prime Minister Kim Kielsen stated in his New Year's speech in 2018, "*(with the economic challenges we have in this country, it is of utmost importance to secure the framework for business development of the four business pillars – fisheries, raw materials, tourism and industry*" (Kielsen, 2018). They constitute the foundation of the Greenlandic economy, generating income and offering jobs. The fishing industry, a well-established sector, has been a pillar of the country's economic policy since the early 1900s, and the prospects of its importance remains. "*Increased growth and employment in the private sector is decisive in safeguarding the foundation for the future welfare and prosperity. [...], we need to boost the development in the fisheries, which continue to be our most important trade and industry sector*" said Karl-Kristian Kruse, then Minister of Fisheries of Naalakkersuisut<sup>1</sup> at a recent conference (2017). Tourism, which has existed in Greenland since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, lacks hitherto to serve as a stable pillar of society like the fisheries; however, the potentials are not unrecognized: "*We are now seeing an upturn in our tourism industry. Tourism could ultimately become one of Greenland's leading industries*" (Naalakkersuisut, 2017). Even though discussions around development of fishery, mining and tourism are significantly focusing on the monetary aspect of it, there are occurrences illustrating an extent towards a more socio-economic perspective. However, this largely occurs within the context of fishery and mining. Naalakkersuisut states by example: "*Earnings from the fisheries must not only generate revenue for Greenland. It is also important to maximize the socio-economic return from our resources, whether these are fish or minerals for example*" (2017) and in another example regarding mining, "*(t)here is promise and expectation among national policymakers and community members alike that development and nearby industrialization could further improve living conditions in Qeqertarsuaatsiaat*" (Snyder & Poppel, 2017). The existence of diverse research<sup>2</sup> with a socio-economic perspective on fishery and mining reflects the awareness of how these sectors contribute in more than monetary senses.

Based on the apparent awareness for the link between economic means and well-being in these two sectors, we decided to put our focus on tourism. As tourism is considered the third economic pillar of Greenland's economy and has been flourishing within the past few years, it feels crucial to also investigate how this sector interrelates with well-being and QoL in Greenland. By looking at the concept of farm stay as an example within the tourism industry, we explore how this specific type of tourism contributes to resident quality of life. We aim to broaden the discussion and to create awareness that tourism, as research in the field of fisheries and mining already showed, also has the potential of contributing to the quality of life in Greenland. We are aware that this means that we are coming short in addressing the interrelation between tourism and quality of life in Greenland as a whole, however, the ambition here is primarily to launch an important debate rather than discussing multifaceted development in Greenland in general.

## **Agriculture, Tourism & Farm Stays in Greenland**

Before exploring how South Greenlandic farm stays contribute and interrelate with resident's quality of life, we provide a short introduction to agriculture, tourism in Greenland and farm stays in South Greenland in the following section. This will pave the way for our analysis section "Exploring the present – Interrelation between quality of life and farm tourism", in which we unfold how farm tourism in South Greenland and QoL are interrelated.

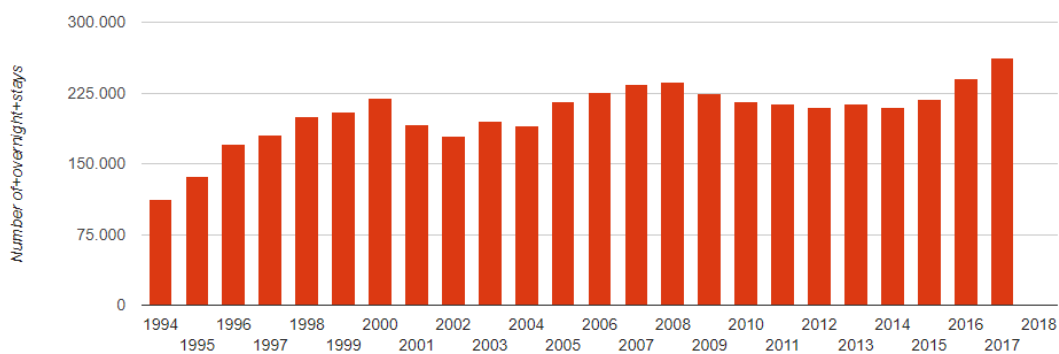
### ***Agriculture***

"Agriculture in Greenland!" – That might sound strange to some ears, but farming as such has a long tradition in South Greenland, tracing back to the Norsemen and Eric the Red in 982 (Bichet et al., 2013). It still represents an important occupation in the small settlements in the South, for example in Qassiarsuk (Visit Greenland, n. d., b). However, it is not surprising that the connection to agriculture is often not made outside of Greenland. Even though agriculture as a department is represented within the governmental bodies, its allocated significance as part of the national economy is shown by its lack of appearance within the annual report of Greenland (Statistics Greenland, 2017). Here, it is merged together with fishery and hunting (when it comes to numbers) and only mentioned within this context (as illustrated by the only explicit mentioning as followed: "Agriculture – products: Sheep, cows, reindeer, fish", Statistic Greenland, 2017: 7). Due to the lack of accountable numbers regarding agriculture and more specifically farming, the assumption that the generated income to the nation's economy through agricultural activities is relatively low (in comparison to fishery and mining) seems substantial.

### ***Tourism in Greenland***

Tourism is a relatively new economic sector in Greenland as it has been carried out in an organized way since the 1960s (Christensen, 1992; Kaae, 2002; Kaae, 2006; Johnston & Viken, 1997). Even though tourism might not be considered a long-established industry in Greenland, it certainly affects the turnover and employment rate in many professions, such as e.g. transportation by air and sea, the hospitality and catering sector, as well as touristic services and offers, such as the trade with souvenirs (Naalakkersuisut, 2015; Statistics Greenland, 2010). Tourism plays an increasing role in the economy of these professions. Accordingly, the interest in and focus on tourism and its development in Greenland has increased over the past years (Bjørst & Ren, 2015; Ren & Chimirri, 2017; Ren & Chimirri, 2018).

As shown in the figure below (fig. 1), the tourism sector has been growing over the last years. Although, this development has not been smooth (due to multiple reasons such as SARS, terroristic attacks, which also affected tourism worldwide) (Statistics Greenland, 2017), it nevertheless led to the further development of the tourism landscape.



**Figure 1:** Number of overnight stays in Greenland (Statistics Greenland, 2017)

However, there are no figures on the total economic impact of tourism on society as the statistical reports published by Statistics Greenland presents descriptions of bednights, number of passengers and so forth.

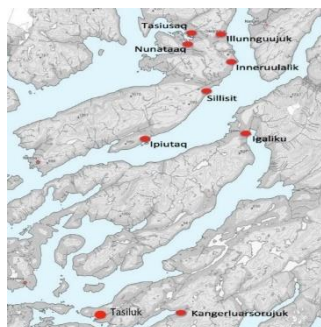
Tourists arrive in Greenland by either cruise ship or international flights into Kangerlussuaq, Ilulissat, Nuuk, Narsarsuaq, Kulusuk or Nerlerit Inaat in Ittoqqortoormiit. Inside Greenland, tourists travel the country by using either flights and/or ships or a combination of both (Statistics Greenland, 2018). So far, tourism in Greenland has been known to be most successful in places like Ilulissat in the Disco Bay area as well as further south in Nuuk and Qaqortoq. Ilulissat is visited by individual travelers, package and cruise ship tourists. This main destination offers tourists to experience the “Big Arctic Five”, where tourists get to go on dog sled trips, whale-watching, meeting local people through the cultural tradition of “kaffemik”<sup>3</sup>, experience the phenomena of Aurora Borealis and to see or stand on the ice cap. In addition, cruise ship tourism, coming with vessels from all over the world visiting settlements and major cities like the capital Nuuk is one of the largest tourism segments when it comes to arrivals (Visit Greenland, 2016). One example of development within the tourism sector are farm stays in South Greenland. Following we will introduce the landscape of farm stays in South Greenland.

### ***Farms Stays in South Greenland***

As part of the agricultural landscape in South Greenland, tourists have had the opportunity to be acquainted with the concept of farm stays for some time. “*For years the visitors in South Greenland have had the option to stay at sheep farms?*” (Visit Greenland, n. d., a) located around Qaqortoq, Narsaq, Igaliku and Qassiarsuk.

Ten farm owners in South Greenland offer a variety of tourism products to visiting guests, from lodging and experiencing the life of farmers, hiking and trekking, hiring kayaks, fishing, horseback riding, participating in iceberg tours, and enjoying homemade Greenlandic food (Visit Greenland, n. d., c).

Due to the recent developments in South Greenland leading to a growth in the number of farms diversifying their traditional farm life and complementing it with tourism related activities, announcements in the public (Visit Greenland, 2017; Jørgensen, 2017) illustrate an increased interest in this field - its growth and future development. “South Greenland has a unique opportunity to develop this special product, and we know from



**Figure 3:** Places of farm stays in South Greenland

*Iceland that the demand is there.*” (Visit Greenland, 2017) This growing interest is confirmed by the local tourist operator stating, “[...] *the farmers never thought that this could be interesting for tourists [...], but now I think that these farms are developing something*” (Tourism operator in Narsarsuaq). In addition, the newly established association “Farm Holidays Greenland” (consisting of ten farms located in the South - see Figure 3) as well as the collaboration between this association, the Kujalleq municipality<sup>4</sup>, Icelandic operators and Visit Greenland (Visit Greenland, n. d., a) indicate the growing awareness of the significance and potential of this type of tourism for Greenland.

## Theoretical Approach

In the following, we introduce the reader to what we understand by using the notions of wellbeing and quality of life. For the purpose of interrelating quality of life with tourism, we apply the bottom-up spill over theory, which is further elaborated below. Finally, this theoretical “layout” is linked to farm tourism as concept, based on the notion of farm diversification. Due to the focus of this article, we are not discussing farm diversification as such. The farmers in our case study are mainly farmers becoming tourist hosts, but continuing their farming business as a main source of income. Even though this complies with the characteristics of farm diversification (Ilbery, 1991; Mahoney, 2004, in Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009), we do not aim to investigate motivations or reasons for such a diversification. We aim to unfold the larger issue on the interrelation between QoL and tourism. Therefore, farm diversification as concept functions in this article as a tool to generate an



**Figure 2:** The settlement Qassarsuk near Narsarsuaq where tourists have an opportunity to stay as guests on the local farms (Photo: Naja Carina Steenholdt)



**Figure 4:** Overview of the location of the farm stays in Greenland (outlined with municipalities)

understanding of and unfold a connection between the economic and social dimension of tourism development.

### ***Quality of Life and Wellbeing***

There is no widely accepted single definition on the concept of quality of life (QoL) or wellbeing. The two terms are more than often mentioned in the same context (Glatzer, 2015). In this article, we apply both terms in the same meaning. In our application of the terms, we lean upon the definition of perceived QoL according to the Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Wellbeing Research, which states: “*Perceived quality of life refers to how people perceive and evaluate their life. It is a perception that reveals the subjective evaluation of the life experience. The components focus on overall life satisfaction and happiness, as well as satisfaction with specific domains of life, e.g., marriage, interpersonal relationship, work, leisure activities, and health.*” (Liao, 2014: 4702). In order to analyze and discuss QoL, we apply the theoretical concept of social indicators. A social indicator is a statistical measure that can track change over time on different aspects of social phenomena (Land et al., 2012). Data about social indicators can derive of both objective statistics, such as e.g. crime rates and more qualitative data, such as perceived satisfaction with life. As Larsen and Fondahl (2010) put it, social indicators are “*simple measurements of key phenomena in complex human systems, (which) enable us to track the direction and rate of change, and thus performance in various domains, and progress toward specified goals*” (p. 22). Furthermore, they are “*valuable simply in building awareness of current conditions and trends over time*” (ibid)”. In this article we follow an exploratory approach, meaning that the introduced theory and data about social indicators function as base in the analysis and discussion of how the developing concept of farm stay in South Greenland affects resident QoL.

### ***Quality of Life in Greenland***

Interest within QoL studies in Greenland arose in the 1970s. Since then there have been few studies on wellbeing and QoL in Greenland and most of those focused on social indicators in quantitative measures, such as household income, education levels and crime rates (From, 1975; Bjerregaard et al., 1995; Bjerregaard & Dahl-Petersen, 2008). Furthermore, the majority of the studies were conducted in frameworks developed in the context of Western societies (Andersen et al., 2002).

The Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR 2004, AHDR 2014) depicts trends and the development state of the Arctic communities. The report recommended applying six distinct indicators in assessments of QoL in the Arctic. Three of the indicators applied were from the Human Development Index (HDI) from the United Nations Development Programme, namely GDP per capita, education and health. However, acknowledging that the HDI indicators failed to address Arctic human development comprehensively, a list of Arctic social indicators was suggested. This formed the basis for further studies with the aim of “filling the gaps” that conventional studies left. In 2010, the studies resulted in the report Arctic Social Indicators (ASI), presenting three social indicators essential for the Arctic communities. The three indicators were fate control, cultural vitality and contact with nature. Fate control can be described as the overall ability to carry life out on own terms. Cultural vitality represents the aspects of cultural community belonging. Contact with nature concerns the close ties to the natural world.

These indicators were also applied in the methodological approach in the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA), which was one of the first to address wellbeing and QoL on a redefined level, taking an interest in the distinctive characteristics of the Greenlandic culture and background (Poppel et.al, 2007). The overall purpose of SLiCA is listed as to:

- *Measure living conditions in a way relevant to Arctic residents*
- *Document and compare the present state of living conditions among the indigenous peoples of the Arctic*
- *Improve the understanding of living conditions to the benefit of Arctic residents (ibid).*

One of the major findings, which were based on nearly 8,000 interviews with Indigenous populations of Canada, Alaska, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Chukotka and the Kola Peninsula, indicated a strong connection between cultural ways of life, cash employment and quality of life (Poppel, 2015).

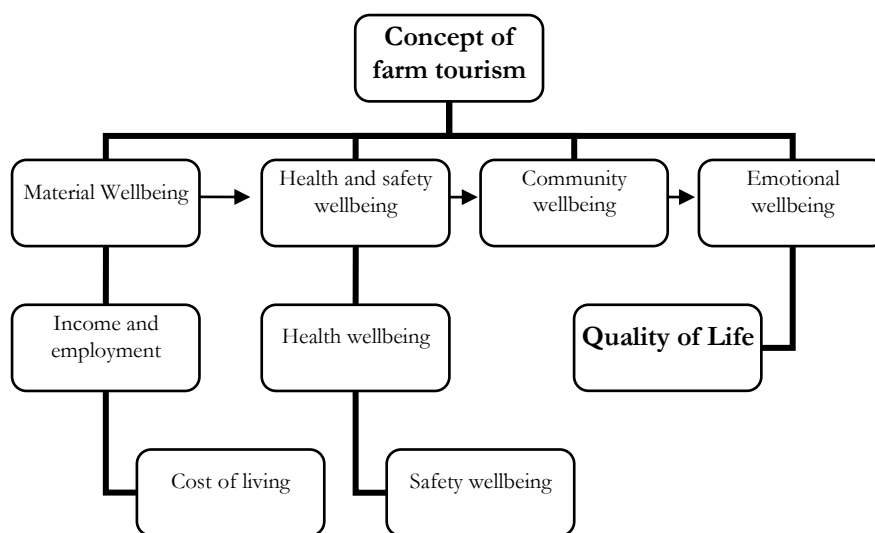
### ***Theoretical Link between Tourism and Quality of Life***

There seems to be academic consensus that tourism has an influence on resident QoL in tourist destination communities (Kim et.al., 2013; Adanan et al., 2010; Fang et.al., 2010; Jurowski et.al., 1997; Cecil et.al., 2010; Nawijn et.al., 2012; Meyer, 2011; Aref, 2011; Liu & Var, 1986). By example, Kim et al. (2013) found that there is a link between the impacts of tourism and perceived overall satisfaction with life. Fang et al. (2010) explored QoL with objective measures, their study implied a connection between increased tourist development and increased QoL. Adanan et al. (2010) discovered that tourism had both positive and negative impacts on residents perceived QoL. When tourism offered economic benefits to the community, the QoL increased. When tourism, on the other hand, resulted in e.g. an increase in cost of living, the QoL decreased. Related to the case of Greenland there is, however, little literature addressing the interrelation between tourism and QoL. Taking our point of departure in the existing literature investigating the link between tourism and QoL in Greenland, this article's general understanding of the interrelation between tourism (including farm tourism) and QoL rests on the bottom-up spillover theory. We chose this specific theoretical approach due to a lack of academic literature and missing statistical data specifically focusing on QoL in connection with tourism in Greenland. Even though an extensive body on literature regarding tourism and its economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts exists, we deliberately chose to use an approach that has not been used to investigate the link between QoL and tourism in Greenland. The spillover theory offers us the possibility to investigate whether generated income from farm tourism in South Greenland can contribute to people's state of wellbeing and if there is more to wellbeing than "just" money.

The bottom-up spillover theory suggests that overall satisfaction of life prerequisites the satisfaction of different life domains and sub-domains (Diener, 1984). In other words, wellbeing is the outcome of the levels of wellbeing in various domains. The life domains and sub-domains are as Kim et al. (2013) characterizes: material wellbeing (e.g. income and cost of living), health and safety wellbeing (physical and mental health as well safety indicators such e.g. crime rates), community wellbeing (living conditions in the communities) and emotional wellbeing (e.g. cultural vitality, leisure time). The principle of the theory signifies that the set of life domains as well as each one of the sub-domains contribute to the overall satisfaction with life, meaning e.g.,

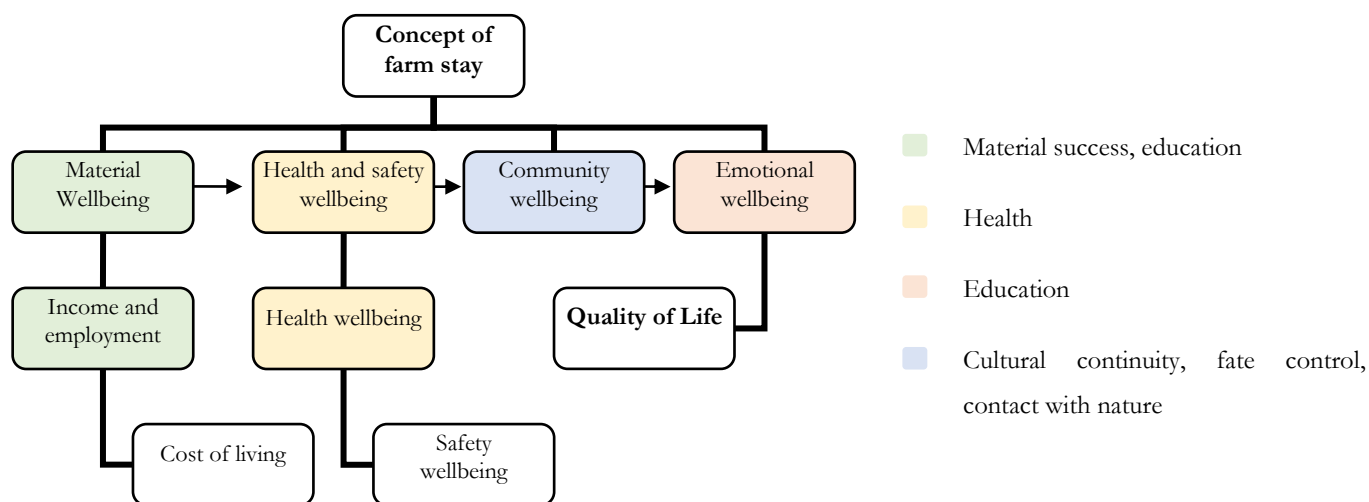


dissatisfaction with income or with the community can “spill over” to the other domains and eventually have an impact on overall QoL (Diener, 1984; Kim et al., 2013). In this article, we apply the theory in connection to the concept of farm stay, as illustrated below:



**Figure 5:** Bottom-up spillover theory and QoL (own visualization based on Aref, 2011)

Additionally, we apply the bottom-up spillover theory to our thematic focus by interconnecting it with the Arctic social indicators (Larsen & Fondahl, 2010) forming part of the theoretical frame of this article. The Arctic social indicators are marked in color, as illustrated beneath:



**Figure 6:** Bottom-up spillover theory and the Arctic social indicators (own visualization based on Aref, 2011)

By interconnecting the bottom-up spillover theory with the Arctic social indicators, it becomes clear that a significant share of the Arctic social indicators are contained in a single life domain (emotional wellbeing). This underlines its importance within the frame of QoL research in the Arctic. Moreover, it displays our hypothesis of QoL being “more than money”.

Finally, the theoretical approach to tourism is inspired by the concept of farm diversification forming the ground for farm stays as part of farm tourism. Farm diversification, the recombination

of farm related resources with new and (for a traditional working farm) non-agricultural offers and services on the farm (Ilbery, 1991), leads to the establishment of farm stays (as part of farm tourism as such). Farm diversification is considered farm tourism when it is incorporated into a working farm and with the purpose of (primarily or secondarily) generating additional income through tourism offers (Mahoney, 2004, in Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009).

## Methodology

In this article, we explore how the developing tourism industry in South Greenland interrelates with resident quality of life. Based on the scarceness of existing academic literature and public awareness within tourism and quality of life in Greenland, we investigate the relevance of the tourism industry, specifically farm tourism, effect on resident quality of life. Through a case study focusing on the concept of farm stays in South Greenlandic settlements, we aim to create an understanding of how resident quality of life and farm tourism interrelates.

### *Phronesis – An Exploratory Research Approach*

Phronetic research by Flyvbjerg (2001) is a research approach which produces “*experience in context as the most appropriate means of generating knowledge that matches social priorities and can contribute to public debate*” (in Thomas, 2012: 2). Accordingly, this specific research approach is exploratory in nature focusing on activities and practical knowledge in everyday life situations and thereby aims to explore current practice as well as historic circumstances in order to find ways to understand praxis (Dredge, 2011) and inform the discussions in Greenland. The farmers’ experiences and motivations to engage in farm tourism are presumably related to the awareness of the significance of tourism and its potential to contribute to their daily life.

In consequence, this exploratory single, small-scale case study aims to generate knowledge and create an understanding of the interrelation of QoL and tourism. Therefore, we believe, that this article can contribute to the ongoing public debate to enlarging the perspective of and to creating grounds for tourism development that embraces economic as well as socio-economic dimensions.

### *Case Study Approach*

The case study approach used for this article is qualitative and was applied to get close to the ‘object under study’ as such an approach “*aims to develop understanding of the context in which phenomena and behaviors take place*” (Altinay et al., 2008). Following, this article serves as exemplary for doing research in the field of QoL and its relation to the economic sectors in Greenland. We try to contest the prevalent perception towards development in Greenland focusing on economic growth and monetary wealth and aim to inspire a different debate on the significance of tourism as a contributor to the QoL of Greenlanders. This way, we aim to contribute a case study that might also be transferable to the investigation of other similar cases in the Arctic (Swanborn, 2010). We are aware of critics posing the question on how far findings of a single case study are applicable and generalizable to similar cases (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, in Kohlbacher, 2006: 22). Here we follow Flyvbjerg (2006), who emphasizes, that “*one can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods*” (ibid: 12). Therefore, the force of our single case studies should not be underestimated, as similar

groundings could be found in the Arctic and it potentially can generate knowledge essential in the debate on achieving economic growth on socio-economic terms in Greenland.

#### *Data Collection*

The case study application entails conducting in-depth investigations (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2013) of qualitative and quantitative data material. The primary data collection of this article derives from three qualitative interviews conducted during a joint field trip in South Greenland in April 2018 as well as the quantitative online survey “Tourism in South Greenland – Farm Stays”. A collection of secondary data material found within the thematic frame of quality of life, tourism and farming is analyzed. The secondary data material consists of relevant publications, articles, reports, press releases and statements from both academic and non-academic sources.

#### *Qualitative Interviews*

In the context of this article, three semi-structured interviews from Narsarsuaq, and the nearby settlements are analyzed. It is important to state that the interviews were not conducted within the frame of this article, as they are each part of the author’s individual PhD projects. Even though the questions were not intentionally posed with the aim of unfolding the connection between tourism and QoL, the content and the following findings revealed such a link leading to the initiative to write this article in the first place. The interviewees, one local tourist operator and two residents working with tourism, were found via a convenience sampling. The residents are married to local farm keepers in settlements near Narsarsuaq and are the primary persons on the farms managing the farm stays. Both of them have more than one occupation and are pursuing other occupations besides activities related to the farm stays. The tourist operator interviewed is a local operator that has been active in the industry for more than 30 years and is involved with farm stays.

#### *Online Survey “Tourism in South Greenland – Farm Stays”*

To complement our qualitative interviews we created an online survey titled “Tourism in South Greenland – Farm Stays”<sup>5</sup> to collect quantitative data about farm stay tourism and elements of quality of life. Complementing refers here to the fact that the interviews were not specifically conducted with focus on QoL in connection with tourism. The survey was created at a later stage (one month after the fieldwork) and served as a tool to enrich existing knowledge and gain new insights. To make it more concrete, one question of the survey specifically asked if the respondent thinks that tourism enriches his/her personal well-being. In the process of working on this article, the need to ask farmers such additional questions appeared and was met by creating the survey. We invited (by email as well as publication on social media platforms, e.g. the Facebook group “Greenland’s Tourism Outback”<sup>6</sup>) farm keepers to answer the survey from the beginning of April until the end of May 2018. Sixty per cent (6 respondents) of the present (10) farm stay owners completed the survey. The questions were categorized into basic data, such as location and year of establishment, and questions on personal opinions e.g. the development of their own business, motivation for starting farm stays, growth potential, challenges and barriers for the business and opinions on possible roles of tourism in their perspectives as farm owners.

## Exploring the Present - Interrelation between Quality of Life & Farm Tourism

Findings in the online survey “Tourism in South Greenland – Farm Stays” indicate that farm owners in South Greenland are aware of the significance and potential of farm stays to their traditional farming activities. All of the respondents credit the motive of “developing their communities” as being one of the most crucial reasons for starting the farm stays. The results from the online survey “Tourism in South Greenland – Farm Stays” show that farmers commenced to offer farm stays in order to generate further income. Additionally, in the interview with the farm keepers’ wife in Farm B, she expressed: *“Ten years ago, we had more rain. The fields had water and grass, which is what we feed the sheep with during wintertime. Now we are having trouble feeding them, all the sheep farmers here experience this, because of the drought. That is why we began to think about getting involved with tourism. That way we do not have to change the lifestyle, we have become accustomed to on the sheep farm”*. The changing climate affects, in other words, both positively and negatively, which supports the notions of Barbieri and Mahoney (2009). Linking it with the bottom-up spillover theory, the changing climate challenges the sustainability of the sheep farm, with the reduction in household resources (material wellbeing and safety wellbeing). However, it also provides an opportunity to combine their livelihood with tourism, which generates more income (material wellbeing) to help sustain the farm lifestyle. Following Getz and Carlsen (2000), farm tourism as the only source of a supplementary non-agricultural income to the existing farm is *“not an end in themselves but a means to support a rural lifestyle”* (Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009: 60). The farm keeper’s wife from Farm A supported this conception, when asked to describe what made her feel dissatisfied: *“I feel so frustrated sometimes at our place. (...) We could use our time better if it was not so expensive to feed the sheep. We could use that money to develop our farm. Almost all of our money goes to feed the sheep. It’s like we’re being strangled. If I did not have my job on the side, it would be very difficult to live the way we do now”*. This supports the aforementioned theoretical link between material wellbeing and QoL, and it leaves this analysis with the notion of sustaining a specific lifestyle through the livelihood, feeding into the discussion on the good life in relation to QoL. So far, we have taken a glance into the concept of QoL, including social indicators significant for QoL in Greenland. Later we addressed how farm stays as an up-and-coming segment come into play in the Greenlandic tourism development. We have constituted its relevance and its need for awareness. The remaining question of whether the concept of farm stays contribute to resident QoL in more than monetary aspects, however still remains.

## The Effect of Farm Tourism on Quality of Life

Literature on farm tourism refers to the potential of this type of tourism as a motor for economic development in order to face socio-economic challenges (Lobo et al., 1999; Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009; Dernoï, 1983; Ilbery et al., 1998; Sharpley & Vass, 2006). Existing studies illustrate that significant changes for farmers (e.g. globalization leading to an increase of competition, more efficient cultivation systems, etc.) lead to major difficulties (Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009). Farm diversification, relating to the combination of farming and tourism, became increasingly popular in the light of these significant challenges for farmers. As stated by Barbieri and Mahoney (2009), *“studies have demonstrated the economic value of farm diversification as one alternative strategy that farmers can utilize to survive and even prosper in today’s changing agriculture climate”* (ibid: 58). However, even though tourism seems to be depicted in academia as this magic wand to nurture economic progress offering the door to economic and socio-economic benefits for the farm owners, questions arise

on how it looks in South Greenland. As mentioned before, the three social indicators cultural continuity, contact with nature and fate control, as applied in SLiCA, are key to QoL studies in the Arctic, including the Greenlandic people. As part of the discussion, we assess if the data from our case study refer to these indicators. Albeit there is potential, farming as well as tourism currently play a minor role in the bigger picture of the economy of Greenland. The minor role of tourism and farming might serve as explanation for their absence in existing QoL studies, like SLiCA, when putting a focus on Greenland.

Analyzing the perspective in SLiCA, by examining the full questionnaire and connecting it to QoL aspects, it is clear that the focus on societal sectors effect on QoL mainly evolves around natural-resource industries like hunting, fishing and oil/mineral extraction as well as public administration. Tourism is mentioned in a few places connected with job opportunities in e.g. Alaska (Poppel, 2015); however, there are no apparent references to tourism in a QoL perspective in Greenland. The same applies for farming. The study addresses the importance of cultural activities, such as hunting, fishing and other nature-related activities like gathering and processing, however farming as such, is not included in simple terms. There are a few references to elements tracing into farming, such as the categories ‘harvesting’ and ‘growing crops’, however, it is unclear whether the findings represent leisure or business farmers. As it is now, farm tourism may play a minor role in the overall picture of both tourism and QoL in Greenland. Nevertheless, tourism in general plays an important role in developing communities in Greenland, as seen in e.g. Ilulissat.

Studies from the newest entry from SLiCA show that in some cases, industrial growth can contribute to improving quality of life. A recently published article by Snyder and Poppel (2017) explores the living conditions in the settlement Qeqertarsuaatsiat, near Nuuk. As part of their research, they uncover how a nearby mine is affecting the living conditions in the adjacent community. The study shows, that “(...) *living conditions in one settlement have improved regardless of the presence of a fully-operational mine.*”

(Snyder & Poppel, 2017). We are aware that occupations within mining and tourism cannot be directly compared, however, since Greenlandic people are not known to traditionally be a mining people, one could argue that the improved living conditions in Qeqertarsuaatsiat are a result of an increase of labor opportunities and income rather than the sole opportunity to work in a mine. With some reservation, it is thus not an unlikely thought that a similar increase in opportunities within the concept of farm stays and tourism in general will result in improved living conditions in South Greenland, as well as other places. Some indications supporting this hypothesis can be found in our analysis. As stated earlier by the farm keepers’ wife from Farm A, she could not sustain the lifestyle they have become accustomed to, without her job on the side. When asked about her overall satisfaction with life, she further elaborated the notion: “*I want a job where I am in control and make the decisions. A job, where I am not so dependent upon others. I mean, of course we are dependent*



**Figure 7:** The main street of Qassiarsuk where horses walk freely around. There are two farms in the settlement that offers stays for tourists. (Photo: Naja Carina Steenholdt)

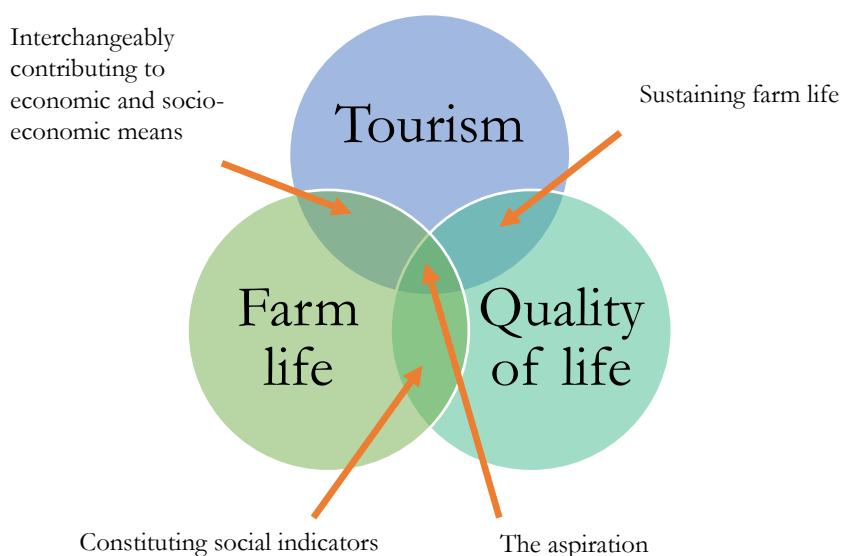
on the tourists, but where I can make the decisions on my own. I am a bit frustrated with the fact that I have yet to reach that goal, but all it takes is the courage to go and do it.”. The opportunity of working fully self-employed with farming, would in other words, improve her sense of QoL, thus indicating that fate control as an indicator contributes to resident QoL. When asked to describe QoL in her own words, the farm keeper’s wife from Farm A further answered: *“Quality of life for me is to be self-employed, that I can take care of myself, that I can go out in nature and use the resources in nature”*. This is on track with the answer from the farm keeper’s wife from Farm B that stated: *“Quality of life is for me is having the sheep. To be able to make our own roast lamb. I think money controls a lot. Of course, you need money, but I feel that quality of life is to be close to nature.”*. These perspectives illustrates the importance of farm tourism as a means to a self-sustaining lifestyle and the interrelation between the farm lifestyle and contact with nature, fate control as well as cultural vitality, which furthermore supports the findings in SLiCA. They also support the bottom-up spillover theoretical approach in terms of overall QoL being influenced by the QoL levels on different domains. Based on these perspectives, we argue, without discarding the importance of material wellbeing, that being able to sustain the farm lifestyle is thus more than generating an income; it contributes to the improvement of the residents’ QoL.

## Remarks & Reflections

Our study suggests that there is a close interrelation between farm tourism and resident QoL in South Greenland. This is supported by our findings that showed, that

- a) Farm tourism provides the opportunity for a self-sustaining lifestyle,
- b) Farm tourism corresponds with residents’ needs, analyzed in terms of social indicators, such as cultural continuity, fate control and contact with nature and finally, thus contributing to overall QoL.

These findings are illustrated in our model of the interrelation between farm tourism and resident quality of life, that serves to demonstrate how tourism, farming and QoL are connected in the case of the farm stays in South Greenland.



**Figure 8:** Model of interrelation between farm tourism and QoL in South Greenland

We explain this model, by stating that when farming is connected with tourism there is an economic as well as socio-economic interrelation. The Arctic social indicators constitute the interrelation between farming and QoL. When we look at tourism in the optics of QoL we learn that it helps sustain the farm life. In the middle where all three segments meet, we find the aspiration, the point where interrelations contribute to positive results within tourism, farming as well as QoL.

Furthermore, this exploratory case study situated within the tourism field as well as the studies of QoL offers a theoretical contribution by applying the bottom-up spillover theory. We ascertained that our study supports the bottom-up spillover theory in the sense that our qualitative interviews corresponded with the notion of overall QoL being influenced by the levels of well-being in different life-domains. Income and money were indeed important means to sustain the farm lifestyle and develop it further. However, we found that the emotional value of being close to nature and having some autonomy over one's own fate were significant indicators and contributed to a higher sense of quality of life in our case study.

As a final reflection, we argue that there are relevant grounds in a larger perspective for further research within the field of tourism and QoL in Greenland. Based on our analysis, we think it is safe to assume that the thousands of tourists coming in all over Greenland every year with cruise ships or visiting households for "cultural experiences" etc., have positive as well as negative impacts on resident QoL.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the informants from South Greenland, who shared their experience and life viewpoints during our field trip in April 2018. We would also like to thank the respondents in our online survey. Additionally, we would like to thank all who supported this article with comments and sound advice. In particular, we would like to extend our gratitude to Lill Rastad Bjørst, Ulrik Pram Gad, Birger Poppel and Carina Ren.

## Notes

1. The Government of Greenland.
2. By example, Hertz (1995) addresses how fishing and mining affects living conditions in North Greenland, Poppel (2006; 2015) explore how subsistence economy deriving partly from hunting and fishing, affects the living conditions throughout Greenland. As a last example, Snyder & Poppel (2017) investigates living conditions in a settlement nearby a mine, and subsequently how mining affects the living conditions in the settlement.
3. A unique Greenlandic tradition, where people serve coffee and homemade cakes and traditional food for family and friends and where everyone who are interested are invited. The custom politeness in a "kaffemik" is that you don't stay for too long, but rather eat and drink at a reasonable pace and then leave the space for the next in line.

4. The most Southern municipality out of the 5 municipalities in Greenland.
5. Original title: ”Turisme i Syd Grønland - Bondegårdsferie”
6. Original name: “Turismens Bagland I Grønland”, public group, initiated by a tourism actor in Greenland.

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